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1975/04/11

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Gerald Ford
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State,
and Assistant to the President for National
Security Affairs
Dr. James R. Schlesinger, Secretary of Defense
General George S. Brown, USAF, Chairman,
Joint Chiefs of Staff
Donald Rumsfeld, Chief of Staff, White House
Phillip W. Buchen, Counsel to the President
John O. Marsh, Counsellor to the President
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant
to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Friday, April 11, 1975
4:30 p. m.

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House

SUBJECT: "Eagle Pull" -- Phnom Penh Evacuation

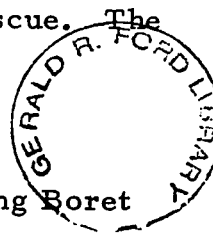
President: I would like to be brought up to date on where we are and what we are going to do. We will restrict ourselves to Cambodia. I am optimistic and I think we will make it.

Schlesinger: "Eagle Pull" will commence at 0900 local. They will be on the ground one hour and 20 minutes total. It will be completed by 11:30 p. m. our time if all goes well.

There'll be 33 helicopters, including three for search and rescue. The first twelve will hold 346 Marines.

President: Will Long Boret go?

Kissinger: "Eagle Pull" will collapse the Government. Even if Long Boret doesn't, enough of his people will go that it will collapse.



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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5

NSC Memo, 11/24/98, State Dept. Guidelines

By W

Date 11/20/00

~~TOP SECRET~~ - XGDS (3)

CLASSIFIED BY: HENRY A. KISSINGER

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President: Do we know if there will be much fighting? There will be a crowd gathering, but there is a better than 50% chance of getting out without fighting.

Brown: There will be air cover but it will only return fire if fire is directed on the evacuation and only to protect the evacuation. The helicopters will come in a stream from the Carrier UBON and peel off from hold points. We can do it all in one lift unless there are too many Khmer.

Schlesinger: We must do it all in one lift.

Brown: The Khmer have quite a lift capability of their own.

Kissinger: Do the Khmer think it is over or is this an American decision?

Brown: It is a U.S. decision. Our intelligence thinks tomorrow will be the last day, but probably it would come on the 13th, an auspicious time.

President: There will be air cover?

Buchen: Yes. They will be under positive control all the time and under FAC.

President: By what authority is this being done?

Schlesinger: The rescue operation is to protect American lives, any fire is to protect American lives and Khmer evacuation is incidental to the American evacuation.

Buchen: Yes. The Khmer evacuation is incidental.

Marsh: We would use the same force anyway, wouldn't we?

Schlesinger: If we had gotten it down to 50 Americans, we would have used a much smaller force and got them out in 10 minutes.

Kissinger: I think we should say we are stretching the law so we don't run counter to the President's request of last night.

Rumsfeld: Don't use "incidental" -- because there are five times as many Khmers and it will be seen as a subterfuge.

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Schlesinger: The original list contained 50 Khmer. That has swollen to 1,100. It is there we might be vulnerable.

President: I would think there would be a crowd gathered.

Schlesinger: We can use Red Cross agents. And they have C130's.

Buchen: Why do we take them out then?

Schlesinger: Ask State.

Kissinger: It was assumed that the airfield would be unuseable. We didn't want to pull the plug by talking to them about evacuation.

[The statements to be read and given to Congress were reviewed.]

President: There is no connection between this and the Vietnam evacuation. There is no connection at all. This is a unique situation.

Brown: Unless we give orders, the Marine Commander may load up with Khmer and leave the Marines, thus necessitating a second flight.

President: I agree. The Commander should be told that all Americans must be aboard the last chopper.

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